



*Many Voices Working for the Community*

## **Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board**

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### **NEWS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**

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### **Advisory Board Member's Interest in History Led to Establishment of Oral History Center**

Steve Stow's interest in history led him to suggest establishing an oral history program for Oak Ridge. That suggestion resulted in a workshop, the formation of a steering committee, and eventual establishment of the Center for Oak Ridge Oral History (COROH).

Stow is a member of the Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board (ORSSAB), a citizens' panel that provides independent advice and recommendations to the Department of Energy's (DOE) environmental cleanup efforts on the Oak Ridge Reservation.

As the former director of the American Museum of Science and Energy (AMSE), Stow had already conducted a number of oral histories of Oak Ridge National Lab (ORNL) pioneers, and he began cataloging other oral histories that had been recorded over the years. "That's when we realized we had about 300 oral histories. After I retired and joined ORSSAB I suggested that we look into consolidating all those recordings in one place," he said.

With a recommendation from ORSSAB, DOE contributed seed money to the City of Oak Ridge to establish COROH, now managed by the Oak Ridge Public Library. Stow is ORSSAB's representative on the COROH steering committee. "The purpose of the center is three-fold: to get our arms around all the histories that have been recorded; continue to record additional histories; and get all of them digitized and available to the public."



Stow provides his own bit of oral history on the Manhattan Project and the history of Oak Ridge as a tour guide for visitors who go on summer bus tours of the reservation. He also serves as ORSSAB's representative as a consulting party to the Memorandum of Agreement for Site Interpretation of East Tennessee Technology Park, the plan for historic commemoration of facilities at the old K-25 Gaseous Diffusion Plant.

Born in Oklahoma, Stow grew up Nashville where he earned a degree in geology from Vanderbilt University. Later, he attended Rice University in Houston earning master's and doctoral degrees in geochemistry.

ORSSAB member Steve Stow makes comments at a recent meeting on historic preservation plans for East Tennessee Technology Park.

He worked for Continental Oil for three years and was a professor of geology at the University of Alabama for 11 years before arriving in Oak Ridge in 1980.

At ORNL he managed high-level nuclear waste disposal programs and was a section head for the earth sciences division. He also held positions as an ethics officer and ombudsman. He became director of the AMSE in 2003.

Shortly after retiring in 2006, he was appointed to ORSSAB. "Being part of the board exposes one to a variety of ideas and opinions. We definitely have an influence on DOE in its decision-making process. It's a beneficial use of one's time," he said.

His time has been beneficial to ORSSAB as well. As a member of the Public Outreach Committee, he has made a number of presentations to local civic organizations about the board and DOE's cleanup program. He currently chairs the board's Stewardship Committee.

Stow will complete six years of service when he rotates off the board in June.

ORSSAB meets the second Wednesday of each month at 6 p.m., at the DOE Information Center at the Office of Science and Technical Information, 1 Science.gov Way in Oak Ridge. Information about the board is available on the internet at [www.oakridge.doe.gov/em/ssab](http://www.oakridge.doe.gov/em/ssab) or by calling (865) 241-4583 or 241-4584.

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